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JOURNAL

OF THE

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION

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and opinions advanced in any of the papers or discussions
published in its proceedings.

VOL. 7

JANUARY, 1920

No. 1

COMMENTS

NEWARK'S EXPERIENCE IN RELOCATING POORLY SET METERS

In the course of a study of the most efficient use of all available labor which war-time conditions made highly important, the water department of Newark, N. J., became convinced that decided improvements in reading meters were practicable. The older members of the Association will recall the amusement which, years ago, greeted the statements occasionally made about a phenomenal number of readings per day by Mr. Charles' men, and their astonishment when they learned that such a record was actually made during a visit to the plant in question by two of our past-presidents. The achievement was possible because the meters were located so as to make reading them exceptionally easy and rapid, something that never occurred to those who felt that Mr. Charles' system of scoring should be sent to the shop to have its over-registration remedied. In Newark, experience has shown a remarkable gain in the efficiency of the meter reading staff by relocating meters hitherto difficult of access. This relocation has been carried out so fully that there are only about a dozen meters in the city now which are not readily reached by the reader.

The work was done by first obtaining from the readers as they made their regular rounds a list of the inaccessible meters. Then inspectors visited them and studied the best remedy for each of

these cases. The owner was then notified to make the change and the reason for it was explained. As the purpose of the water department was to secure the maximum improvement as quickly as possible, cases of serious opposition to making the relocation were given little attention until the first campaign was well along toward what it was foreseen would be a satisfactory conclusion. The strong objectors then received attention, and the changes were brought about by using such measures as seemed best fitted to the conditions of each case. The practical outcome of the work has been an increase of about fifty per cent in the efficiency of the meter reading staff, a result of decided importance in a city of nearly half a million inhabitants. The result also shows conclusively the importance of locating meters originally in the most accessible place available, something which it is thought will be of interest to water departments generally. John W. Judson, chief accountant for the Newark Water Department, has been very energetic in pushing the work of relocating meters and in seeing that new meters are satisfactorily placed.

There is one feature of the work about which there exists a difference of opinion, and the views of the members on it will be received gladly in Newark. This is the proper location of a meter for a factory service. Some hold that the best place is outdoors in a well-built, easily reached pit. Others hold that the meter should be in the factory building. This is now a subject of such importance in Newark, and may become so elsewhere, that members who have had experience showing any special advantage or disadvantage in either location are asked to send reports of their experience to the editor of the JOURNAL, in order that they may be published in the JOURNAL in addition to being communicated promptly to the writer of these notes.

MORRIS R. SHERRERD.

THE SUPERVISING ENGINEERS' TROUBLES IN CANTONMENT CONSTRUCTION

The paper on the water works of Camp McClellan which Mr. Scharff contributes to this number of the JOURNAL affords an opportunity to make some long overdue comments on the troubles experienced by the supervising engineers who had local charge of the engineering features of the construction of the military camps and